

**Corporation for National and Community Service**

**2010 Social Innovation Fund**

**Jobs for the Future, Inc.**

**Reviewer Comments – Phase 1**

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**Jobs for the Future, Inc.**

**Section 1 – Reviewer Comments: Group 1**

## SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND 2010 PANEL CONSENSUS FORM

*Instructions throughout this form are indicated in red.*

### PROGRAM DESIGN (45%)

The Social Innovation Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Program Design.

#### A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

*The Corporation asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in the Act, there are two basic operational models of SIF intermediaries. The first is a SIF that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a "geographically-based SIF." The second model is a SIF that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an "issue-based SIF." The Corporation will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF.*

##### i. **Geographically-Based SIF**

*To apply as a geographically-based SIF, the applicant must propose to focus on serving low-income communities within a specific local geographic area, and propose to focus on improving measurable outcomes related to one or more of the following priority issue areas:*

- **Economic Opportunity** – Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;
- **Youth Development and School Support** – Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;
- **Healthy Futures** – Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.

*The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to those issue areas that the applicant will seek to improve.*

##### ii. **Issue-Based SIF**

*To apply as an issue-based SIF, the application must propose to focus on addressing one of the following priority issue areas within multiple low-income communities:*

- **Economic Opportunity** – Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;
- **Youth Development and School Support** – Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;

- **Healthy Futures** – Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.

*The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in the priority issue area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to the priority issue area that the applicant will seek to improve.*

## **B. USE OF EVIDENCE**

- Applicants must include in their application information describing their track record of using rigorous evidence, data, and evaluation tools to:*
  - *Select and invest in subgrantees;*
  - *Support and monitor the replication and expansion of subgrantees; and*
  - *Achieve measurable outcomes.*

## **C. COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Not applicable. The applicant's Community Resources should be assessed in the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section. Applicants were instructed **not** to provide information in this section. If applicants include information in this section, it should not be considered in your overall rating for the Program Design section.

## **D. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

- Subgranting**
  - Applicants must describe the process by which they will competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees, and, if applicable, the process by which they have pre-selected some subgrantees. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of subgrantees that are innovative nonprofit community organizations serving low-income communities and that possess:*
    - *A strong theory of change;*
    - *Strong leadership and financial and management systems, including data management;*
    - *A strong financial position, including funding diversity, the ability to meet the requirements for providing dollar-for-dollar matching funds, and the ability to sustain the initiative after the subgrant period concludes;*
    - *Strong community relationships;*
    - *A commitment to and track record of using data and evaluation for performance and program improvement;*
    - *Evidence of effectiveness, including a demonstrated track record of achieving specific measurable outcomes related to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary;*
    - *Strong potential for replication or expansion;*
    - *A well-defined plan for achieving specific measurable outcomes connected to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary, evaluation of program effectiveness, performance improvement, and replication or expansion; and*
    - *A commitment to use grant funds to replicate, expand, or support their programs.*

*Either as part of its review of the applications or in clarification reviews prior to award, the Corporation may request additional information regarding pre-selected subgrantees for compliance and appropriate outcomes.*

ii. **Technical Assistance and Support**

- a. *Applicants must include in their application information describing how they will provide technical assistance and support (other than financial support) that will increase the ability of subgrantees to achieve their measurable outcomes, including replication or expansion. Replication or expansion may happen in various ways (including, for example, creating new sites or affiliating with another program to replicate an intervention) and in multiple contexts (including, for example, serving more people in a current geography or growing to new geographies).*

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**Panel Narrative Assessment**

Applicant has produced a comprehensive and detailed program design to increase economic opportunity through building local infrastructures to build and sustain job creation in up to twenty-four high need communities. The applicant's comprehensive approach to job creation deserves an excellent rating because of its understanding and adherence to the SIF NOFA requirements. The applicant demonstrates a substantial track record of success, use of evidence, ample capital investment, and a detailed program design. The applicant appears able to both go to scale as well as establish new start-ups in the twenty-four communities that truly need positive outcomes. Applicant does not appear to have any barriers to implementing a solid program.

**Significant Strengths**

- Applicant has presented a solid program design that allows for scaling up existing projects and to begin start-ups in new communities "to increase economic opportunity for disadvantaged workers and job seekers through investments in nonprofit workforce collaborations in up to twenty-four high need communities". A significant component of the program design is to create local vehicles that engage local stake holders, including employers, to create and sustain a local infrastructure to focus on workforce development. (Program Design A.i.)
- Applicant has developed a funded infrastructure to conduct research across sites as part of an on-going national evaluation. For example, each grantee is required to commission an independent local evaluation providing detailed performance data on each supported sectoral partnership. (Program Design B.i.)
- Applicant demonstrates the need for this Issues-Based SIF. It is clear and concise and makes the case for the importance of a non-profit workforce collaborative to create and sustain more jobs at the local level. (Program Design A.ii.)
- The applicant has a strong track record of using data and evaluation tools as evidence by the various reports and evaluations conducted on previous programs. For example, the applicant has used findings from the evaluations of SkillWorks and other IWI sites. Applicant also has applied

lessons from P/PV's 2009 "Job Training that Works: Findings from the Sectoral Employment Impact Strategy". (Program Design B.i.)

- The applicant has proposed an evidence based approach to impact evaluation and analysis as described by the detailed evaluation processes. For example, the applicant proposes "close coordination of impact evaluation design, implementation, and analysis with formative, qualitative evaluation of subgrantees and the overall initiative" using quasi-experimental design and if feasible, the evaluation will employ regression discontinuity or cutoff-based design, with assignment of participants to treatment and comparison groups based on an ordered assignment variable not directly related to the treatment, which enables closer approximation of experimental design. This approach is impressive and the applicant appears to be fully capable of executing it. (Program Design B.ii.)

### Significant Weaknesses

Applicant has no specific weaknesses in its Program Design

Select a Rating for PROGRAM DESIGN (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☒ Excellent

☐ Strong

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Weak/Non-responsive

## ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (35%)

The Social Innovation Fund NOFA states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Organizational Capacity.

### A. ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

*In evaluating your organization's ability to provide program oversight, the Corporation will consider:*

- The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:*
  - *The ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including:*
    - *Experience with and capacity for evaluation; and*
    - *Experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion.*
  - *Well-defined roles for your Board of directors, administrators, and staff;*
  - *A well-designed plan and systems for organizational (as opposed to subgrantee) self-assessment and continuous improvement; and*
  - *The ability to provide and/or secure effective technical assistance.*
- Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment, including the extent to which you:*
  - *Have a track record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact;*
  - *Demonstrate leadership within the organization and strong relationships within the communities served;*
  - *Have a track-record of raising substantial resources, and, if you are an existing Federal*

- 
- grantee, having secured the matching resources as required in your prior grant awards; and*
- *The extent to which your community support recurs, increases in scope or amount, and is more diverse, as evidenced by:*
    - *Collaborations that include a diverse spectrum of community stakeholders;*
    - *A broad base of financial support, including local financial and in-kind contributions; and*
    - *Supporters who represent a wide range of community stakeholders.*

## **B. ABILITY TO PROVIDE FISCAL OVERSIGHT**

*Entities eligible to apply for SIF grants include:*

- *Existing grantmaking institutions, or*
  - *Partnerships between an existing grantmaking institution and another grantmaking institution, a State Commission, or the chief executive officer of a unit of general local government*
- i. *Existing grantmaking institutions are organizations in existence at the time of the application where, investing in nonprofit community organizations or programs is an essential (rather than collateral) means of fulfilling their mission and vision. In keeping with this view, grantmaking institutions will generally have the following as part of their core operating functions:*
- *Conducting open or otherwise competitive programs to award grants to or make investments in a diverse portfolio of nonprofit community organizations;*
  - *Negotiating specific grant requirements with nonprofit community organizations; and*
  - *Overseeing and monitoring the performance of grantees.*
- ii. *In evaluating your organization's ability to provide fiscal oversight, the Corporation will take into account its review of your organization's capacity. The Corporation will further consider:*
- *The extent to which your organization, or proposed partnership, has key personnel with the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience to provide fiscal oversight of subgrantees; and*
  - *Whether your organization, or proposed partnership, has specific experience in providing fiscal oversight of subgrantees of Federal funds.*

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## **Panel Narrative Assessment**

The lead applicant has strong organizational capacity to sub-grant as well as to provide technical assistance. In addition to the applicant's own expertise, there is capacity from National Fund for Workforce Solutions, a funder's collaborative group, which can provide not only resources but also knowledge of best practices and current research. Applicant not only addresses the macro program issues, but is organized to send their fiscal staff to a site if they believe that there are issues better addressed in person to ensure there is compliance at every level.

## **Significant Strengths**

- The applicant demonstrates a particularly strong ability to provide sound oversight, including: experience with and capacity for evaluation; and experience with and capacity for supporting



replication or expansion and existing partnerships to achieve all of the components related to the proposal. (Organizational Capacity A.i.)

- The applicant has a strong record of accomplishment including a record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact and innovation. For example, this includes regularly sharing evaluations as the basis for discussion and program improvement. (Organizational Capacity A.ii)
- Applicant has exceptionally strong organizational capacity to both sub-grant and provide technical assistance through the foundation created, "The National Fund for Workforce Solutions" to build models and approaches that have a research component built in from the start. (Organizational Capacity A.i.)
- The applicant demonstrates a strong record of fiscal oversight and describes the key personnel necessary for oversight of the proposed activities. These personnel are well prepared for the work ahead. (Organizational Capacity B.i. and B.ii)

### Significant Weaknesses

Applicant has no significant weakness in its organizational capacity.

Select a Rating for ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☒ Excellent

☐ Strong

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Weak/Non-responsive

## COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (20%)

The Social Innovation Fund NOFA states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

### A. BUDGET AND PROGRAM DESIGN

*In evaluating the cost effectiveness and budget adequacy of your proposed program, the Corporation will consider:*

- Whether your program is cost-effective based on:*
  - *The extent to which your program demonstrates diverse, non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;*
  - *The extent to which you are proposing to provide more than the minimum required share of the costs of your program; and*
  - *Whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because you are proposing to serve areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved.*
- Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.*

### B. MATCH SOURCES

- i. *At the time of submission of the application, applicants must demonstrate either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent their first year matching funds, based on the amount of Federal grant funds applied for.*
- ii. *In addition to the match eligibility criteria, the Corporation will evaluate the extent to which you have a combination of cash-on-hand or commitments to meet the full match requirements, and whether your organization will be able to provide financial resources for your SIF program beyond the minimum required match.*

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### Panel Narrative Assessment

Applicant has proposed a wide and deep program with an annual budget of over \$7 million for which they have raised more than their share of the match from an impressive list of 9 foundations as well as instituting a local and state funding strategy. Building on years of experience, applicant knows what it really costs to scale up or start up workforce solutions. Their budget provides substantial sub-grants and quality technical assistance to ensure their program design is implemented well.

### Significant Strengths

- Applicant has presented a budget and program design that is well thought out and amply supported by nine national foundations, as well as a local and state government funding strategy. Building on years of experience, applicant has a strong idea of what it really costs to deliver positive results in workforce development. For example, the applicant has required all subgrantees to match the first \$150,000 of SIF dollars 4:1. This ratio is 3 times higher than the required 1:1 ratio as required by the SIF. A second example is that the Fund has leveraged over \$100 million from 256 local funders to date, including philanthropy, corporate giving, United Ways, and city and state government. (Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A.B.)
- The applicant's proposed cost structure and use of the CNCS funds is adequate to support the program design. In particular the ability to sub-grant \$5,000,000 has potential to seed many sustainable vehicles. (Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy A.ii..)

### Significant Weaknesses

Applicant has no significant weaknesses in this area.

**Select a Rating for COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY** (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☒ Excellent

☐ Strong

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Weak/Non-responsive

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### OVERALL APPRAISAL

Applicant has proposed to increase economic opportunity for disadvantaged workers and job seekers through investments in non-profit workforce collaborations in up to twenty-four high need communities. The applicant will: (1) expand effective models of sector-based workforce partnerships and (2) provide a

Applicant Name: Jobs for the Future, Inc.  
Application ID#: 10SI115304

community-level vehicle to sustain financial and institutional commitments. Applicant will work in both scaling up current work sites and also start-ups in selected communities. Applicant has diversified national funding, an excellent track record, and a research-driven program design. Applicant is an excellent candidate for the SIF resources and should deliver impressive results that have the potential to transform workforce development.

**I. Select one Band for this application** (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")  
**Ensure that your selection is supported by your panel's Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, Ratings, and Overall Appraisal Statement. Take into consideration the weighting of each category.**

- ☒ **Band I (Excellent):** A comprehensive and thorough application of excellent merit with very significant strengths and no/minimal significant weaknesses.
- ☐ **Band II (Strong):** An application that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support, where the value of the significant strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses.
- ☐ **Band III (Satisfactory):** An application with potential, where strengths and weaknesses are approximately equal. However, some fundamental weaknesses have been identified.
- ☐ **Band IV (Weak/Non-Responsive):** An application with very significant weaknesses and no/minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include an application that is non-responsive to the published criteria.

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## Rank

**As a panel, Rank this application in relation to the other applications on your panel.** Complete this section only after all applications before your panel have been reviewed and consensus has been achieved on each one. The highest rank is "1".

**Rank:** 3 of 7 total applications on Panel # 2.

## CONSENSUS RUBRIC

Please use this Consensus Rubric as guidance when selecting your Ratings or Bands.

**BAND I (Excellent)** — *A BAND I rating reflects that the application is compelling, consistently excellent in quality, and addresses all requirements; thereby showing the highest potential for success.*

The **Excellent** application consistently:

- ✓ Goes beyond what was requested, showing that the applicant has anticipated issues that may arise.
- ✓ Provides a thorough, detailed response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a clear and highly compelling description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Provides clear evidence to support all objectives of this section (no assumptions are made).
- ✓ Supports ideas and objectives with comprehensive plans explaining and connecting ideas to objectives.

**BAND II (Strong)** — *A BAND II rating reflects that the application is solid, good-quality, and has great potential for success.*

The **Strong** application:

- ✓ Provides a response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a realistic description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Explains most assumptions and reasons.
- ✓ Supports ideas with comprehensive plans, examples, or outlines.

**BAND III (Satisfactory)** — *A BAND III rating reflects that the application generally meets requirements for a reasonable chance of success, but is neither especially strong nor especially weak.*

The **Satisfactory** application:

- ✓ Covers most of the information requested, with a few exceptions.
- ✓ Is sometimes unclear how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Makes some assumptions and leaves some reasons unexplained.
- ✓ Supports individual ideas with plans, examples, or outline.

**BAND IV (Weak/Non-responsive)** — *A weak/non-responsive rating reflects that the application is below standard especially in ability, skill, or quality; indicating that this application will most likely not succeed as described or is not responsive to the application requirements.*

The **Weak/Non-responsive** application:

- ✓ Does not provide one or more key pieces of requested information.
- ✓ Gives an unclear description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Gives many unsupported assumptions and reasons with little or no connection to objectives.
- ✓ Tends to "parrot" back the question, rather than answer and explain it
- ✓ Makes many assumptions and many reasons are not defined.
- ✓ Did not connect the activities to the anticipated results.
- ✓ Does not address or respond to the requirements/conditions of the NOFA.
- ✓ Proposes activities that are not consistent with the NOFA and application instructions.

**2010 Social Innovation Fund**

**Jobs for the Future, Inc.**

**Section 2 – Reviewer Comments: Group 2**

## SOCIAL INNOVATION FUND 2010

### PANEL CONSENSUS FORM

*Instructions throughout this form are indicated in **red**.*

**Before you begin, please fill out the Applicant Name and Application ID# in the above header.** This Panel Consensus Form (PCF) is where each panel records its consensus assessment of an application. The completion of this form may be led by any panelist; that individual will be designated the Lead Reviewer (LR). All Expert Reviewers are expected to serve as the LR on at least one application. The consensus assessment should be based on the panel's examination of the full application Narrative, which consists of the following 3 categories:

Category	Percentage	Subcategories
Program Design	45%	A. Goals and Objectives
		B. Use of Evidence
		C. Community Resources
		D. Description of Activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. Subgranting</li> <li>ii. Technical Assistance and Support</li> </ul>
Organizational Capacity	35%	A. Ability to Provide Program Oversight
		B. Ability to Provide Fiscal Oversight
Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy	20%	A. Budget and Program Design
		B. Match Sources

Panels will utilize Panel Consensus Calls to discuss each application and come to agreement on the content of the Narrative Assessment for each category, the Rating for each category, the Overall Appraisal Statement and the Band in which the application will be placed. When completing this form, the LR should rely on four primary documents: 1) the application being reviewed; 2) the IRW Compilation for the application being reviewed (compiled prior to discussion by the panel Facilitator); 3) the SIF Notice of Federal Funds Availability (NOFA); 4) the Consensus Rubric at the end of this form.

**Please complete the following steps:**

1. For each of the 3 categories (Program Design; Organizational Capacity; Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy), the LR should:
  - a. **Write a 3 – 5 sentence Narrative Assessment** reflecting the panel's assessment of the quality of the response in the category being assessed; it is important that this narrative is not a summary of the application, rather the panel's evaluation of the application's quality.
  - b. **List the application's significant strengths and weaknesses and annotate each.** Each significant strength or weakness **must** be supported by **at least one** of the Eligibility or Application Review Criteria that were in the SIF NOFA. (examples are included in this form)
  - c. **Taking into consideration** both the Narrative Assessment and the listed strengths and weaknesses, **select a Rating** by checking the appropriate box.
2. **Complete the Overall Appraisal section.** In this section, you will:
  - a. Provide an Overall Appraisal Statement; and
  - b. Select a consensus Band that represents the quality of the application as a whole. The Bands are described in the Overall Appraisal section at the end of this form, and Appendix D of the Review Guide.
3. **After the panel has discussed all applications, provide a Rank for each application.**

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## PROGRAM DESIGN (45%)

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### A. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

*The Corporation asks applicants to use a thematic approach in describing their proposed investments in community organizations. As established in the Act, there are two basic operational models of SIF intermediaries. The first is a SIF that will operate in a single geographic location, and address one or more priority issues within that location. This model is referred to as a "geographically-based SIF." The second model is a SIF that will address a single priority issue area in multiple geographic locations. This model is referred to as an "issue-based SIF." The Corporation will assess whether the application properly proposes goals and objectives as either a geographically-based or an issue-based SIF.*

#### i. **Geographically-Based SIF**

*To apply as a geographically-based SIF, the applicant must propose to focus on serving low-income communities within a specific local geographic area, and propose to focus on improving measurable outcomes related to one or more of the following priority issue areas:*

- **Economic Opportunity** – Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;
- **Youth Development and School Support** – Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;
- **Healthy Futures** – Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.

*The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area(s) within the specific local geographic area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to those issue areas that the applicant will seek to improve.*

#### ii. **Issue-Based SIF**

*To apply as an issue-based SIF, the application must propose to focus on addressing one of the following priority issue areas within multiple low-income communities:*

- **Economic Opportunity** – Increasing economic opportunities for economically disadvantaged individuals;
- **Youth Development and School Support** – Preparing America's youth for success in school, active citizenship, productive work, and healthy and safe lives;
- **Healthy Futures** – Promoting healthy lifestyles and reducing the risk factors that can lead to illness.

*The application must provide 1) statistics on the needs related to the issue area within the geographic areas likely to be served, including statistics demonstrating that those geographic areas have a high need in the priority issue area, and 2) information on the specific measurable outcomes related to the priority issue area that the applicant will seek to improve.*

### B. USE OF EVIDENCE

- i. *Applicants must include in their application information describing their track record of using rigorous evidence, data, and evaluation tools to:*
- *Select and invest in subgrantees;*
  - *Support and monitor the replication and expansion of subgrantees; and*
  - *Achieve measurable outcomes.*

### **C. COMMUNITY RESOURCES**

Not applicable. The applicant's Community Resources should be assessed in the Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy section. Applicants were instructed **not** to provide information in this section. If applicants include information in this section, it should not be considered in your overall rating for the Program Design section.

### **D. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES**

i. **Subgranting**

- a. *Applicants must describe the process by which they will competitively select their nonprofit community organization subgrantees, and, if applicable, the process by which they have pre-selected some subgrantees. Specifically, applicants must describe how their competitive subgrant selection process will ensure a portfolio of subgrantees that are innovative nonprofit community organizations serving low-income communities and that possess:*
- *A strong theory of change;*
  - *Strong leadership and financial and management systems, including data management;*
  - *A strong financial position, including funding diversity, the ability to meet the requirements for providing dollar-for-dollar matching funds, and the ability to sustain the initiative after the subgrant period concludes;*
  - *Strong community relationships;*
  - *A commitment to and track record of using data and evaluation for performance and program improvement;*
  - *Evidence of effectiveness, including a demonstrated track record of achieving specific measurable outcomes related to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary;*
  - *Strong potential for replication or expansion;*
  - *A well-defined plan for achieving specific measurable outcomes connected to the measurable outcomes for the intermediary, evaluation of program effectiveness, performance improvement, and replication or expansion; and*
  - *A commitment to use grant funds to replicate, expand, or support their programs.*

*Either as part of its review of the applications or in clarification reviews prior to award, the Corporation may request additional information regarding pre-selected subgrantees for compliance and appropriate outcomes.*

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- a. *Applicants must include in their application information describing how they will provide technical assistance and support (other than financial support) that will increase the ability of subgrantees to achieve their measurable outcomes, including replication or expansion. Replication or expansion may happen in various ways (including, for example, creating new sites*



*or affiliating with another program to replicate an intervention) and in multiple contexts (including, for example, serving more people in a current geography or growing to new geographies).*

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**Provide a panel assessment of the application's PROGRAM DESIGN as follows:**

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
  - **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
  - **Select a Rating for this section.**
- 

### **Panel Narrative Assessment**

JFF's has been managing the National Fund for Workforce Solutions (NFWS) since 2007. As a collaborative grantmaking approach to "accelerate the creation and expansion of new workforce development strategies that emphasize skills, credentials, and career ladders in high growth sectors to provide a permanent route out of poverty" the initiative already has had success. The NFWS's model is notable in its "dual customer orientation" – it meets the need of employers in high demand industries and of workers who seek career advancement in those sectors. JFF and its funding partners have considerable experience in the workforce development sector and have built the NFWS collaborative approach on data and "lessons learned" from earlier workforce partnerships – thereby creating a model based on the current best evidence in the field and one that has strong potential for success. JFF has undertaken the due diligence process for assessing potential subgrantees' readiness over the past several years in its role as manager of the NFWS, which bodes well for the process outlined in the SIF.

### **Significant Strengths**

**Subgrantee Selection:** A pool of potential subgrantee cities are identified for "Scale Up" grants (Boston, Baltimore, Central Wisconsin, Cincinnati, Dan River Region (VA), Des Moines, Milwaukee, Philadelphia, Seattle, Washington, DC) and for "Start Up" grants (Albuquerque, Atlanta, Austin, Bradenton (FL), Greenville (SC), Knoxville, Louisville, Mobile, Greensboro (NC), San Antonio). Data on individuals who live below 200% of poverty, are unemployed, have less than a high school diploma and other employment statistics are provided as evidence of need in these communities.

**Measurable Outcomes:** Measurable outcomes for individual participants (# of participants served; # of participants who earn an education or workforce training credential; # of participants who secure and maintain job placements; increases in participants post-training and post-placement wages) and at the systems-level (# employers served; changes in employer human resources practices; changes in education and training provider practices; state or local policy changes achieved through local collaborative advocacy efforts; increases in local / regional funder support) are clearly identified (page 14 and ). (*Program Design A.ii.*)

**Subgrantee Section:** Criteria for selecting "Scale Up" and "Start Up" grantees are outlined in detail (pp 21-22). Scale-up grants (\$200,000 to \$300,000 each/year) will be awarded to 12 -15 groups in the communities noted above where current NFWS investments exist. These subgrantees will be organizations that have established workforce partnerships and that have provided evidence of

accomplishments and the capacity for increasing employer engagement and “deepening the impact” of their work. The “Start Up” subgrantees (\$150,000 each/year) will be selected through an open competition in 6 to 8 high need areas, targeted in the south and the southwest. Based on NFWS’s history since its 2007 launch, the criteria and approach to subgrantee selection has yielded strong results: “All 22 [previously] funded workforce collaboratives are implementing their strategic plans and meeting local match requirements.” (*Program Design D.i.a*)

**Data and Evaluation:** In 2004, Investing in Workforce Intermediaries (IWI) supported the development of several workforce collaborations in Boston, San Francisco, Austin, and Baltimore, and areas of Pennsylvania and Rhode Island, among others, which led the Department of Labor to fund a national evaluation. The creation of NFWS is based on the successful outcomes of these local programs and the evaluation data. (*Program Design B.i.*)

**Capacity of Subgrantees:** The applicant describes a strong track record of working collaboratively with subgrantees to improve (p.26, p.18), for example describing their use of tools to help subgrantees make midstream corrections. The dashboards used by sites also provide a real-time management tool. There appears to be significant technical assistance available to subgrantees throughout the application and implementation process, and on an ongoing basis in the form of site coaches. (*Program Design B.i. and D.ii.*)

### Significant Weaknesses

**Detail of Evidence:** Overall the proposal is strong, however, there are instances where phrases “significantly improve” or “robust body of preliminary evidence” and “increasing economic opportunity” are used without specific data to substantiate the statement. Some data are in other parts of the proposal, but it would be helpful to insert facts when claims of past accomplishment are made (e.g. p.15). (*Program Design B.i.*)

**Subgrantees:** While the 10 cited geographic locations listed for both start up and scale up investment are helpful and demonstrate need, it is insufficient because these are not necessarily going to be the sites chosen and little detail is given about their readiness for investment according to the applicant's own criteria (existing collaboration and known partners). (*Program Design A.ii.*)

**Partners:** The Council on Foundations is listed as a partner, but little information is provided regarding their role except that they will enable outreach to local funders for matching grants. More information on their involvement and level of collaboration would have been helpful. (*Program Design D.ii.*)

**Select a Rating for PROGRAM DESIGN** (double-click in the applicable box and select “checked”)

☐ Excellent

☒ Strong

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Weak/Non-responsive

## ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (35%)

The Social Innovation Fund NOFA states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant’s Organizational Capacity.

### A. ABILITY TO PROVIDE PROGRAM OVERSIGHT

*In evaluating your organization's ability to provide program oversight, the Corporation will consider:*

- i. *The extent to which your organization has a sound structure including:*
  - *The ability to provide sound programmatic oversight, including:*
    - *Experience with and capacity for evaluation; and*
    - *Experience with and capacity for supporting replication or expansion.*
  - *Well-defined roles for your Board of directors, administrators, and staff;*
  - *A well-designed plan and systems for organizational (as opposed to subgrantee) self-assessment and continuous improvement; and*
  - *The ability to provide and/or secure effective technical assistance.*
- ii. *Whether your organization has a sound record of accomplishment, including the extent to which you:*
  - *Have a track record of supporting organizations that demonstrate evidence of impact;*
  - *Demonstrate leadership within the organization and strong relationships within the communities served;*
  - *Have a track-record of raising substantial resources, and, if you are an existing Federal grantee, having secured the matching resources as required in your prior grant awards; and*
  - *The extent to which your community support recurs, increases in scope or amount, and is more diverse, as evidenced by:*
    - *Collaborations that include a diverse spectrum of community stakeholders;*
    - *A broad base of financial support, including local financial and in-kind contributions; and*
    - *Supporters who represent a wide range of community stakeholders.*

## **B. ABILITY TO PROVIDE FISCAL OVERSIGHT**

*Entities eligible to apply for SIF grants include:*

- *Existing grantmaking institutions, or*
  - *Partnerships between an existing grantmaking institution and another grantmaking institution, a State Commission, or the chief executive officer of a unit of general local government*
- i. *Existing grantmaking institutions are organizations in existence at the time of the application where, investing in nonprofit community organizations or programs is an essential (rather than collateral) means of fulfilling their mission and vision. In keeping with this view, grantmaking institutions will generally have the following as part of their core operating functions:*
    - *Conducting open or otherwise competitive programs to award grants to or make investments in a diverse portfolio of nonprofit community organizations;*
    - *Negotiating specific grant requirements with nonprofit community organizations; and*
    - *Overseeing and monitoring the performance of grantees.*
  - ii. *In evaluating your organization's ability to provide fiscal oversight, the Corporation will take into account its review of your organization's capacity. The Corporation will further consider:*
    - *The extent to which your organization, or proposed partnership, has key personnel with the*

- 
- knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience to provide fiscal oversight of subgrantees; and*
- *Whether your organization, or proposed partnership, has specific experience in providing fiscal oversight of subgrantees of Federal funds.*
- 

**Provide a panel assessment of the application's ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY as follows:**

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
  - **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**
  - **Select a Rating for this section.**
- 

### **Panel Narrative Assessment**

JFF's 25-year history of documented success in a range of workforce development projects indicate the capacity, experience and judgment needed to implement and manage the expansion of the NFWS with a SIF grant successfully. JFF has managed several federal grant programs and has administered many government-funded grants and contracts, "including multi-year grants and contracts with the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education." (p.29). JFF's team of eight in its fiscal department are well-versed in the intricacies of managing and reporting on federal grants fiscally and programmatically, which provides a high level of confidence in their ability to manage the complexities of the SIF.

### **Significant Strengths**

The applicant shows compelling and significant capacity to oversee programs given its track record and organizational structure which is conducive to this activity, including existing staff with relevant experience and up to date training. (*Org Capacity A.i.*)

In particular, the model of having a team of site coaches for each site is compelling and will allow for success to be shared across sites in an efficient way. The applicant also has mobilized an impressive group of partners, who have already been working together in a proven capacity at a scale equivalent to that proposed by the new effort. (*Org Capacity, A.*)

The applicant has a track-record of raising significant resources and secured an impressive local match in each instance. The applicant has demonstrated experience managing federal funds and securing a match, for example its history of DOL funding. (*Org Capacity B.*)

### **Significant Weaknesses**

**Partners:** While JFF has the reputation and experience to lead the project and the narrative provides evidence of this there is much less in the proposal on the role of the Council on Foundations and Workforce Learning Strategies.

Additional information could have been provided on the local expertise of various partners or what certain or other partners bring "to the table" in the collaboration. While it is clear that the group of funders is powerful, in order to ensure true diversity, more detail could be provided. (*Org Capacity B.ii.*)

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**Internal capacity:** The applicant could go into more detail on how they themselves have improved over the years of implementing similar programs. There is more than adequate documentation of how subgrantees are evaluated/improve, but more could be said for the applicant internally. (*Org Capacity A.*)

Select a Rating for ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☐ Excellent

☒ Strong

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Weak/Non-responsive

## **COST EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY (20%)**

The **Social Innovation Fund NOFA** states that the following will be considered when reviewing an applicant's Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy.

### **A. BUDGET AND PROGRAM DESIGN**

*In evaluating the cost effectiveness and budget adequacy of your proposed program, the Corporation will consider:*

- i. *Whether your program is cost-effective based on:*
  - *The extent to which your program demonstrates diverse, non-Federal resources for program implementation and sustainability;*
  - *The extent to which you are proposing to provide more than the minimum required share of the costs of your program; and*
  - *Whether the reasonable and necessary costs of your program or project are higher because you are proposing to serve areas that are significantly philanthropically underserved.*
- ii. *Whether your budget is adequate to support your program design.*

### **B. MATCH SOURCES**

- i. *At the time of submission of the application, applicants must demonstrate either cash-on-hand or commitments (or a combination thereof) toward meeting 50 percent their first year matching funds, based on the amount of Federal grant funds applied for.*
- ii. *In addition to the match eligibility criteria, the Corporation will evaluate the extent to which you have a combination of cash-on-hand or commitments to meet the full match requirements, and whether your organization will be able to provide financial resources for your SIF program beyond the minimum required match.*

**Provide a panel assessment of the application's COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY as follows:**

- **Write a brief Narrative Assessment;**
- **List the Significant Strengths and Weaknesses (annotate your comments by referencing the applicable Eligibility or Application Review Criteria); and**

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- **Select a Rating for this section.**

### Panel Narrative Assessment

The current funders of the NFWS are a strong and notable group of national grantmakers who have entrusted JFF with the oversight of this initiative to date. This is a clear indication of JFF's ability to oversee and ensure budget adequacy. JFF's experience in managing workforce development projects enables them to predict the level of resources needed to administer the program effectively and these are noted in the proposal. At the time they submitted their request, JFF had secured 56% of the year one match and had approached other national funders to join the NFWS. The probability is high that they will meet or exceed the required match for the duration of the SIF.

### Significant Strengths

The applicant plans to raise 53% of funds required (leaving 47% to be sourced from CNCS). This exceeds the minimum required share of the costs of the program. (*Cost Effectiveness A.i.*)

Cash on hand plus commitments from co-investors far exceed 50% of first year funds and demonstrates a commitment to provide more than just financial resources (*Cost Effectiveness B.*)

### Significant Weaknesses

There is good detail for JFF's role and costs, not much for COF or WLS. (*Cost Effectiveness A.ii.*)

The full amount of the match from outside sources has not been raised (page 39) although the likelihood that it will be met successfully is strong. (*Cost Effectiveness B.*)

**Select a Rating for COST-EFFECTIVENESS AND BUDGET ADEQUACY** (double-click in the applicable box and select "checked")

☐ Excellent

☒ Strong

☐ Satisfactory

☐ Weak/Non-responsive

## OVERALL APPRAISAL

### I. Provide a 3 - 5 sentence Overall Appraisal Statement of the application taking into consideration:

- The Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, and Ratings from each category; and
- The weighting of each category (Program Design (45%), Organizational Capacity (35%), Cost-Effectiveness and Budget Adequacy (20%)).

The NFWS is an established workforce collaborative and its track record of developing job creation and job training strategies with a "dual customer approach" position it favorably as a SIF. The goals, to provide a "permanent route out of poverty ... while meeting workforce needs of employers in high growth sectors" as well as creating on-going capacity in low-income communities "to sustain these

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workforce training modules long-term” are realistic and attainable. The NFWS has begun to measure the impacts of its current grantees and the strong results to date support the SIF expansion and growth model. JFF’s reputation as a leader in the workforce development field as well as being the trusted fiduciary for a significant roster of national funders in the NFWS (Annie E. Casey Foundation, California Endowment, the Ford Foundation, Microsoft Corporation – among others) demonstrate clear evidence of their ability to undertake this ambitious project. While there are some weakness in the plan (the role of the Council on Foundations is not clear, and some additional information could be provided on measurements of outcomes), overall it is a very compelling proposal with a strong likelihood of attaining its stated goals.

**II. Select one Band for this application (double-click in the applicable box and select “checked”)**

**Ensure that your selection is supported by your panel’s Narrative Assessments, significant strengths and weaknesses, Ratings, and Overall Appraisal Statement. Take into consideration the weighting of each category.**

- ☐ **Band I (Excellent):** A comprehensive and thorough application of excellent merit with very significant strengths and no/minimal significant weaknesses.
- ☒ **Band II (Strong):** An application that demonstrates overall competence and is worthy of support, where the value of the significant strengths outweigh the identified weaknesses.
- ☐ **Band III (Satisfactory):** An application with potential, where strengths and weaknesses are approximately equal. However, some fundamental weaknesses have been identified.
- ☐ **Band IV (Weak/Non-Responsive):** An application with very significant weaknesses and no/minimal significant strengths that have been identified. This option may also include an application that is non-responsive to the published criteria.

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## Rank

**As a panel, Rank this application in relation to the other applications on your panel.** Complete this section only after all applications before your panel have been reviewed and consensus has been achieved on each one. The highest rank is “1”.

**Rank: 3 of 7 total applications on Panel # 10.**

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## CONSENSUS RUBRIC

Please use this Consensus Rubric as guidance when selecting your Ratings or Bands.

**BAND I (Excellent)** — *A BAND I rating reflects that the application is compelling, consistently excellent in quality, and addresses all requirements; thereby showing the highest potential for success.*

The **Excellent** application consistently:

- ✓ Goes beyond what was requested, showing that the applicant has anticipated issues that may arise.
- ✓ Provides a thorough, detailed response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a clear and highly compelling description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Provides clear evidence to support all objectives of this section (no assumptions are made).
- ✓ Supports ideas and objectives with comprehensive plans explaining and connecting ideas to objectives.

**BAND II (Strong)** — *A BAND II rating reflects that the application is solid, good-quality, and has great potential for success.*

The **Strong** application:

- ✓ Provides a response to all of the information requested.
- ✓ Provides a realistic description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Explains most assumptions and reasons.
- ✓ Supports ideas with comprehensive plans, examples, or outlines.

**BAND III (Satisfactory)** — *A BAND III rating reflects that the application generally meets requirements for a reasonable chance of success, but is neither especially strong nor especially weak.*

The **Satisfactory** application:

- ✓ Covers most of the information requested, with a few exceptions.
- ✓ Is sometimes unclear how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Makes some assumptions and leaves some reasons unexplained.
- ✓ Supports individual ideas with plans, examples, or outline.

**BAND IV (Weak/Non-responsive)** — *A weak/non-responsive rating reflects that the application is below standard especially in ability, skill, or quality; indicating that this application will most likely not succeed as described or is not responsive to the application requirements.*

The **Weak/Non-responsive** application:

- ✓ Does not provide one or more key pieces of requested information.
- ✓ Gives an unclear description of how the proposed activities will achieve the anticipated results.
- ✓ Gives many unsupported assumptions and reasons with little or no connection to objectives.
- ✓ Tends to "parrot" back the question, rather than answer and explain it
- ✓ Makes many assumptions and many reasons are not defined.
- ✓ Did not connect the activities to the anticipated results.



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- ✓ Does not address or respond to the requirements/conditions of the NOFA.
- ✓ Proposes activities that are not consistent with the NOFA and application instructions.